

# **Moab Valley Fire Protection District Commission Meeting**

**45 South 100 East, Moab Utah 84532**

**August 20, 2024 - 4:00 p.m.**

## **A. Call to Order:**

1. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Archie Walker at 4:00 p.m.
2. Commissioners Present: Chairman Archie Walker, Commissioner Jim McGann, Commissioner Charlie Harrison
3. Staff Present: Chief TJ Brewer, Battalion Chief Brandon McGuffee, Administrator Cathy Bonde
4. Others Present: Mike Kelso

## **B. General Business:**

1. Approval of Minutes – Commissioner Harrison motioned to approve minutes from the July 16, 2024 regular meeting. Commissioner McGann seconded, and the motion passed unanimously. Commissioner Harrison motioned to approve minutes from the July 30, 2024 special meeting on intent to annex. Commissioner McGann seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.
2. Citizens to be Heard – None wishing to speak.
3. Approval of Bills – Commissioners postponed approval of bills.

## **C. Chief's Report**

1. Chief Brewer reported 39 calls to service since the last regular Commission meeting.
2. Clark Maughan and Brandon McGuffee have done some research on the value of engines we are considering selling. Commissioners were provided a document with relevant information for discussion. Commissioner Walker said the Commission would come back to the discussion.
3. Operations crews have been busy reorganizing and renaming the engines. A stat sheet is being created for each engine with pictures to assist in identifying engines.
4. Chief Brewer went to UFRA last week to attend an FSRA class and helped instruct. Traedyn Brewer and Nate Wiggins attended the class. This class was followed by a heavy vehicle rescue class. The trainings were great but also created an overwhelming concern of our department being called to a heavy vehicle incident and being undertrained and underequipped to handle it.
5. Moab Fire has never had an overtime policy for the full department, and we are working to draft one. Input from Commissioners is welcome.
6. Chief Brewer asked Commissioners for input on budgeting for 2025. He suggested workshops to discuss budget and the future of the department as we are going through some major changes.
7. Chief Brewer and Cathy have been busy with annexation and budget.

8. A discussion was had on equipment the Department is considering selling. Part of the discussion included an engine on the list going to Thompson. Commissioner Walker asked what Thompson will look like upon annexation. Chief Brewer said he sees Mark Marcum as a division chief. He has had conversations with Mark, and how Thompson will look is still being worked through. Chief Brewer said Thompson conversation with staff has reminded him why we had originally asked the County for more funding in support of annexation. In looking at our 2025 budget, we do not have funds to do much with Thompson in the immediate future. The Thompson station does not meet standards for efficient operations. Commissioner McGann asked about our request of the County to make improvements to the Thompson property. Chief Brewer stated a list of repairs was put together when representatives from the District and the County toured the property. He is concerned that the County will not provide all the repairs that need to be done. Commissioner Walker said he had a conversation with Grand County Commissioner Walker, and it appeared he was unfamiliar with what was going on in relation to the issues with Thompson. The impression was it is no longer the County's problem. Chief Brewer stated the County has never acted as if annexation is a priority or issue for the County to be actively involved in. He stated Moab Fire has sunk ridiculous amounts of time and energy into a solution for the County's fire protection issue. A County Commissioner complained to Chief Brewer about the condition of the Thompson Fire station, and the property currently belongs to the County, not Moab Fire.

Commissioner McGann reiterated that one of our conditions for annexation was that the County provide repairs to Thompson.

Cathy stated she originally told the County that we needed the asset transfer complete by the time we have our final vote on annexation and that includes right of first refusal on the property currently housing the sheriff and attorney offices as well as repairs to Thompson. Grand County's attorney's office said they probably could not get all of the research needed for asset transfer done in time for our final annexation vote. Our attorney then advised us to get an MOU in relation to the asset issues. Cathy has let the County know we need an MOU approved by the Grand County Commission in place before our final annexation vote. All we have heard since then is that Bill Jackson will do the grading if he is directed to do so.

Commissioners continued to discuss engines being considered for sale. Brandon presented research done in relation to the value of the engines. Chief Brewer stated Engine 466 is the only one he would consider keeping. It has had a number of issues mechanically, but those have been addressed, and it has the potential to still fill needs of the Department. Commissioner Walker agreed to retaining Engine 466 but selling the other pieces of equipment. Commissioner Harrison said if someone makes a reasonable offer, we should take it. He also suggested starting more locally in searching for buyers. Commissioners asked to be notified of any offers made.

#### **D. Old Business:**

1. Salary Survey/Job Descriptions – Chief Brewer stated that although he and Cathy have tried to meet to further work on this, other issues have taken priority. Cathy added that Mike Swallow has been following up regularly and providing further valuable information in relation employee performance and evaluation. Chief Brewer stated that once we get out of annexation and budget season we should be able to focus more on this issue.

2. Procurement Policy – Cathy stated she was able to spend a little time on the procurement policy last week, but it is not at the point of presenting to Commissioners yet. Her goal is to have it complete and approved by the time the CWDG grant kicks in. They will be auditing us to insure our policy is being followed when we purchase items for grant reimbursement.

3. Annexation – Cathy stated that after the Commissioners approved the intent to annex, the map was finalized. She then got a list of the parcel owners on the map from Chris Kauffman at the County Treasurer's office, and it was discovered that Castleton was included. Castle Valley Fire wants to annex Castleton but has not yet, and we were going to leave it out of our annexation so they could annex it next year. Grand County had offered to help Castle Valley Fire with the annexation, and Cathy stated Grand County will need to step up and help them with the transfer of Castleton parcels from us to Castle Valley Fire next year. Chief Brewer added Castleton got caught up in the hastiness of trying to get the annexation done. We prefer that Castleton be part of Castle Valley Fire. Cathy added that if we wanted to remove Castleton now, we would not be annexing this year as the Commissioner would need to approve a different intent to annex, and the process would have to start all over from there.

The mailing notices required for annexation will be going out this week. The cost for mailings is under \$1000.00.

We thought the County could do the signage we need to post as they do it for zoning issues, but we found out they have a set template that doesn't fit our need, so Cathy has contacted the company that provides signage for the County. We are having 6 signs made, and they will cost us about \$300.00. The signage proofing is close to final.

Cathy has contacted the Time-Independent in relation to running the intent to annex notice for two weeks. Because of the content of the posting, it is approximately \$400.00 per run.

Attorney's fees incurred so far are just over \$200.00.

We will request reimbursement from the County for costs as just under \$6000.00 remains of the \$25,000.00 the County originally set aside for annexation.

Cathy will follow up with the County on the asset issue as she has not heard back from them.

#### **E. New Business:**

1. 2025 Budget Preliminary Discussion – Chief Brewer stated he is looking for direction from the Commissioners on the 2025 budget, especially with annexation. He would also like to know Commissioners thoughts on salaries which may be a closed session issue if professional competence or character is discussed. Cathy put together a draft budget and she and Chief Brewer have been making adjustments to it, primarily reducing expenditures

in line items and removing needs. Chief Brewer said we cut needs every year, and it is frustrating.

Commissioner Walker asked other commissioners if they should meet to go through the salary survey compensation information and compare what we have. Commissioner Harrison said we need to fix it. Chief Brewer stated we will not be able to do much this coming year, and Commissioner Walker said that regardless we need to figure out the direction we are going in. Discussion was had on whether Commissioners should come to administration with salary feedback or whether administration should present to Commissioners. Chief Brewer stated we have a draft budget done, but Cathy added there is a difference between the budget being done with what we can afford for salaries and where we need to be with salaries.

Commissioner McGann brought up the procurement policy and future capital expenditures. Chief Brewer said the next engine needed is a rescue truck. Commissioner McGann asked if Thompson will be in need of a rescue truck also. Chief Brewer said Rescue 1 would probably go out to Thompson as a temporary fix when we get a new rescue truck for Station 1. He said he is looking at a heavy duty rescue truck for Station 1, and it is a \$1,000,000.00 piece of apparatus. Once a build starts, we are probably 3 years out from receipt. Chief Brewer suggested we address the rescue truck next year for this reason as well as the fact that the cost will go up every year we wait.

Chief Brewer also suggested investing in swift water rescue considering the floods we have had. A UTV is also needed. A new ladder truck follows these items on the list of replacement or acquisition.

Discussion returned to Thompson Fire and a rescue truck. Brandon stated we have done some pre-planning and there are AMKUS tools there already. Chief Brewer added we have provided Thompson with a rescue jack. He also added that it is not his department, so he cannot fully speak to its operations. Mark Marcum has recently hired someone to clean the Thompson station for \$200.00 per month which will become our expense if we annex. Commissioner McGann stated the County said it would do the work needed to the building and property and we should push them on that. Chief Brewer said he does not know why they have not started work on it already as it is their building. Commissioner McGann asked if county maintenance people go out there, and Chief Brewer said he did not believe they do.

Commissioner Walker asked what we need to do to get the county to act. Cathy stated she felt it was not a priority to them, they just expect us to take care of it. Commissioner Walker added he felt there was a lack of respect for us and our Commission. Cathy stated she felt our only option was to state we would not annex if these issues are not addressed, nor would we be the agency to propose annexation next year.

Commissioner McGann asked if the county has received the list compiled, and Chief Brewer confirmed they had. He said their subcommittee saw it and Quinn Hall has it. The issue goes back to when Chris Baird was the point person for the County. Cathy provided the Moab Fire Commissioners with a copy of the list which contained some items like tiny homes and gym equipment that we would not expect the County to provide. Discussion was had on the items on the list and further details were provided.

Chief Brewer asked if Commissioners felt we needed to go back out to Thompson, fine tune the list, and inform the County what must be done for annexation to take place.

Commissioner Walker asked if we would be inheriting a viable fire station and followed up by stating we would not. Commissioners agreed to a site visit at the Thompson Fire Station on Wednesday.

**F. Adjourn:**

1. Chair Walker adjourned the meeting at 5:20 p.m.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Archie Walker, Chair**

**Attest:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Cathy Bonde, Clerk**